

By Telegraph.

New York, April 18.—(Telegraph.)—The cotton market was quiet today. Gold 27 1/2.

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From Washington.

The Hon. Alexander H. Stephens was

examined to-day before the Reconstruction

Committee at great length. The

testimony was given in a manner

which has attracted much of the

attention of the committee. He is

assumed to be the most important

witness who has yet

appeared before them. It is impossible

to say what impression the evidence of

Mr. Stephens may have upon the

action of the committee; but if they

were not determined to adopt the

Southern States under any circumstances, it is

difficult to see how they could refuse to do so

in view of the evidence laid before them by

Mr. Stephens. Mr. Stephens has laid

before them the fact that the

people of Georgia are as loyal as the

people of Massachusetts or New York

and that they are doing ten times as much

for the negroes as the people of those

States, and that they ardently desire a

restoration to the Union, yet the committee

have determined to sustain them in

this determination, that none of the

States—not even Georgia—shall be

restored to the present Congress.

The extraordinary decision of Judge

Underwood, referred to by Judge

Underwood, has occasioned considerable

excitement in official circles. The

decision is based upon a wilful perversion of

the President's peace proclamation. There is

no ambiguity about that instrument.

The President intends by it to restore

the *habes corpus* in all the States men-

tioned in the proclamation, and that intention

is plainly expressed. The President is

authorized to do so by the act of

Underwood's action in the matter, and it is

said that he will soon take such action in

relation to the status of the citizens of the

Southern States as will no longer leave

the matter in doubt. In conversation to-day,

the President expressed surprise that any

one could take such a mistaken view of the

proclamation as Judge Underwood had

done, and declared not only that martial

law was abolished all over the South, and

that the *habes corpus* act restored, but also

that henceforth, under the late decision of

the Supreme Court, there are no offenses

whatever that can be tried before military

tribunals.

It is quite probable that Judge Under-

wood will have to revise his own decision.

In regard to the case of Jefferson Davis, I

would not excite false hopes in the minds

of his friends, but I am satisfied, from

what I have learned to-day, that the Presi-

dent will very soon order his release on

parole, or even, perhaps, his unconditional

release. He will not be brought to trial.

The only particle of evidence against

him that could convict him, and the com-

mittee will so report.

The proclamation of general amnesty

will undoubtedly soon be issued. The Presi-

dent has decided that all the public de-

partments be closed to-morrow, and a

general suspension of public business to

take place, in commemoration of the death

of President Lincoln.

The negroes are to celebrate on Monday

with great pomp. Mr. Stanton has ordered

all the negro regiments here to parade.

It is not probable that the President will

issue any proclamation concerning

the Fenian movement, though it may

be worth more to the Fenian leaders than

anybody else. The President, as it has

been rumored by some who are likely to

know his views on the subject, is too shrewd

to commit any such mistake, even if the

British Minister should express any alarm

at the Fenian menace, which, by the way,

he has not done since the scare of St. Pa-

would be a measure of real economy to

make provision for schools and suggest

that grants of public lands, have often

been made for such less worthy objects

than the education of the negro. He thinks

that the duty of the officers and agents of the

Bureau should be more clearly defined by law,

and not left so much to military orders.

The island question should be settled

by statutory enactment, the more espe-

cially as the freedmen who hold grants

under the Freedmen's order are through-

out convinced that the lands rightfully be-

long to them. The President should be

encouraged to retain volunteer officers who

are needed as agents of the Bureau in ser-

vice after the mustering out of their re-

spective regiments.

The President, to-day, in answer to the

resolution of the House, on the 10th in-

stant, requesting information in regard to

the rights and interests of American citi-

zens in the fishing grounds adjacent to the

British Provinces, transmitted a report

from the Secretary of State, to whom the

resolution was referred.

WASHINGTON, April 12, 1866.

TO THE PRESIDENT.—The Secretary of

State, to whom was referred a resolution of

the House of Representatives, of the 10th

inst., in the following words: "Resolved,

That the President be requested to inform

this House what steps have been taken to

protect the rights and interests of Ameri-

can citizens in the fishing grounds adja-

cent to the British Provinces, and whether

any legislative action on the part of Con-

gress is, in his judgment, necessary to se-

cure those rights and interests in conse-

quence of the abrogation of the redempti-

on treaty of 1854." has the honor to report

that the Secretary of the Navy has, by the

President's direction, taken preparatory

measures for sending, seasonably, a naval

force to the fishing grounds adjacent to the

British North American Provinces, which

force, it is believed, will be adequate to

protect the rights and interests of American

citizens against any unlawful violence. It is

proper to state, however, that this Depart-

ment has reason to believe that there are

at present no good grounds for apprehend-

ing any collision, or any necessity for the

employment of force.

The attention of the President, and also

the attention of Her Majesty's Govern-

ment, has been directed to the question

whether negotiation or legislation could be

advantageously employed in adjusting the

differences which have heretofore existed

between the United States and Great Brit-

ain concerning the fisheries, etc. Meas-

ures taken in that regard are not suffi-

ciently matured to render it expedient or

beneficial to suggest any form of special

action by Congress at the present time.

Respectfully submitted,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

The President of the Senate, to-day, laid

before that body the following communica-

tion:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE.

WASHINGTON, April 12, 1866.

Sir:—In response to a resolution of the

honorable Senate, passed on the 8th inst.,

requesting me to inform that body what

steps, at any time since my report of last

December, any persons have been permit-

ted to enter upon the duties of office, and

to receive the salary or emoluments there-

of, without taking the oath prescribed by

Act of Congress, together with other in-